

DOCKET NO.: FCI-2632/C3069
Application No.: 09/989,271
Office Action Dated: November 1, 2004

PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116

REMARKS

Claims 45-54 are currently pending in the application, and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Foreign Patent EP 0 893 850 A2 (hereinafter referred to as FP '850). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

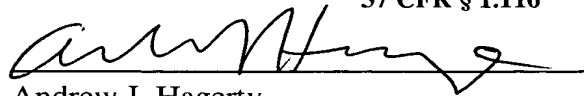
Each of the pending claims recites, *inter alia*, "a flexible contact element at least partially disposed within the [terminal's] contact section in a non-fixedly secured manner." The examiner states that FP '850 teaches that the spring member may be detachably mounted (referencing col. 5, lines 35-36), and that "this teaching is seen to anticipate the newly amended claim language of *non-fixedly secured* because the ability of the spring member 30 to be detached makes it non fixedly secured to the terminal." Applicant respectfully submits that because the spring member is *detachably mounted*, it necessarily is *attached* when it is mounted or secured to the terminal. There does not appear to be any distinction between attached and fixed when describing the engagement or securement of the spring member to the terminal. And this type of securement, as taught by FP '850, is the opposite of how the flexible element is secured within the terminal contact section as recited in the pending claims—there is no attachment or coupling of the flexible element to the terminal contact section (*see, e.g.*, Figures 4-6).

Although Applicant believes that the as written claims are patentable over FP '850 in view of the above discussion, Applicant is open to a clarifying amendment to each of the independent claims, such as, for example, "a flexible contact element at least partially disposed within the contact section in a ~~non-fixedly secured~~ non-attached [or non-fixed] manner." Thus, Applicant invites the examiner to call the undersigned representative at 215-557-5907 to discuss an examiner's amendment along these lines.

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Date: December 29, 2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew J. Hagerty', written over a horizontal line.

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